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SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR USAID  
FOR G, INL, DRL, PRM, IWI,  
FOR EUR/PGI AND EUR/SE PARENTE AND YOUNTCHI  
FOR G/TIP DONNELLY  
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TAGS: [KCRM](#) [PHUM](#) [KWMN](#) [SMIG](#) [KFRD](#) [ASEC](#) [PREF](#) [ELAB](#) [GR](#) [TIP](#)  
SUBJECT: GREECE PART 1: FIFTH ANNUAL TIP REPORT SUBMISSION

REF: A. 2004 STATE 273089

- [1](#)B. ATHENS 415
- [1](#)C. 04 ATHENS 2662
- [1](#)D. 3/1 GRISSETTE/DONNELLY EMAIL
- [1](#)E. THESSALONIKI 007
- [1](#)F. 04 ATHENS 3071
- [1](#)G. 04 ATHENS 2199

[1](#)1. The following is Sensitive but Unclassified. Please Protect Accordingly.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Below are Embassy Athens' responses to the Fifth TIP report questionnaire. Text is keyed to requests under "Overview" and "Prevention."

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Overview  
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[1](#)A. Greece is a destination country for international trafficking, mainly in women and children. There are no/no reliable estimates of the problem. In November 2004 an academic observer estimated there were 13,000 victims of sex trafficking (women and teenage girls) but many observers believe that these estimates are high. The same academic observer estimated there were 20,000 victims in 2003. Anti-child trafficking NGOs estimate - roughly - that hundreds of children, mainly Roma from Albania, are victims of labor trafficking. The primary anti-child trafficking NGO reported that of 173 children it identified begging in the streets of four major Greek cities in the first 11 months of 2004, 22 were victims of trafficking. There are sporadic reports of labor trafficking of adult men, generally from South Asia, in the greater context of illegal migration to work in the agriculture sector. There are reports that Greece is also a transit country for trafficking, with victims being trafficked on to Italy and other EU countries, as well to the Middle East.

[1](#)B. Persons are trafficked to Greece from all over the world, but NGOs and police agree that most victims are women from former Soviet states and the Balkans. In 2004 the Hellenic Police reported TIP victims were identified from Russia (50 victims), Ukraine (21), Belarus (8), Moldova (10), Bulgaria (10), Romania (41), and Albania (9). Smaller numbers of trafficking victims were identified from the following countries: Dominican Republic (1), Armenia (1), Austria (1), Georgia (2), Ghana (1), Greece (2), Eritrea (1), U.K. (3), Lithuania (4), Morocco (1), Nigeria (3), the Netherlands (2), Uzbekistan (5), Poland (1), Thailand (1) and the Czech Republic (3). Child trafficking victims are almost exclusively Roma from Albania trafficked for labor, or teenage girls trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation. Anecdotal reports on labor trafficking involve trafficking of adult men - undocumented migrants - from South Asia, the Balkans, and Eastern Europe.

[1](#)C. The child trafficking phenomenon continues to diminish, according to NGO and police officials. The past practice of Albanian parents "renting" or "selling" their children to traffickers has dramatically decreased according to NGOs and police as it has become easier for Albanian parents to emigrate to the country. Child anti-trafficking NGOs report that as a result of immigrant legalizations, many previous child TIP victims are now legally resident in Greece and are exploited for labor by relatives or purported relatives. The primary child anti-trafficking NGO reported that at least 50 percent of exploited Albanian children they detected during street work between September 2003 and December 2004 were in Greece along with both of their natural parents.

Police and NGOs agree that there are fewer sex-trafficking victims entering Greece from trafficking source countries without legal documentation, that is to say, more victims now enter Greece with visas and sometimes also possess work permits. This complicates their identification as victims and removes the TIP screening that may occur when illegal

immigrants are arrested on immigration or prostitution violations. Police and NGOs also agree that incidences of sex-trafficking victims being held in abject slave-like conditions have decreased; women are more often given small amounts of money and are less frequently kept locked in confinement.

NGOs, IOM, and police report the increasing trend of West African, especially Nigerian, illegal immigrants/ prostitutes who are reportedly under a "spell" which means they either will not or can not speak to either police or NGOs and refuse assistance offered to them as possible TIP victims. There were additional reports of Nigerian women who, when applying for refugee status, identified their white male benefactors and travel facilitators as "friends" whom they did not work for. For these reasons, it remains unclear to the Greek authorities and NGOs whether or not these subjects are TIP victims.

A final trend that surfaced in 2004 is that of young pregnant women, sometimes from Bulgaria, who arrive in Greece in order to sell their newborn babies. Police dismantled rings of such so-called "baby-selling" operations in Athens and Crete during 2004 and arrested traffickers and at least one Greek couple who had attempted to purchase a baby. As the trends and methods of trafficking change, police and NGOs agree that the phenomenon has become more difficult to track and that increasingly savvy traffickers remain "one step ahead" of anti-TIP efforts.

**D.** Ambassador received a commitment from the Ministry of Health on February 7 to undertake research into the magnitude of the TIP problem in order to track trends (Ref B). After dialogue on the issue with MFA, Post passed guidance from G/TIP on methodology used in U.S. studies on trafficking on February 9. The MFA has since entered into consultation with an academic on the subject, and we will continue to encourage completion of a survey or study.

**E.** Women are trafficked to bars, brothels, and strip clubs; children are trafficked to beg in the streets of major cities. In 2003, labor unions, media and police reported that South Asian and other migrants are forced to pay off debts in flower farms and other agricultural work. According to victim testimony, NGOs, and police, TIP victims are subjected to violence, threats, withholding of documents, and debt bondage. An IOM representative reported in 2005 that he believes the practice of debt bondage persists, though there is no current information on this practice available.

**F.** Not applicable - Greece is not a country of origin for TIP victims.

**G.** There is political will at the highest levels of government to combat trafficking in persons. In November, Greece appointed Ambassador Frangiskos Verros from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the National Coordinator for Anti-Trafficking. Nine Secretaries General (of Foreign Affairs; Justice; Public Order; Health and Social Solidarity; Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization; Employment and Social Protection; Education and Religious Affairs; Economy and Finance and Equality) comprise an inter-ministerial coordinating committee that meets at least twice per month (the last meeting was February 8, 2005) to coordinate work for the implementation of the 2002 anti-trafficking law and the 2003 Presidential Decree. Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice, Panayiotis

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Panouris, co-chairs the meetings with Ambassador Verros. The Justice Minister and Secretary General Panouris spoke publicly about Greece's commitment to fight trafficking at two recent conferences. The Ministers of Justice, Foreign Affairs, Health, Interior, Public Order, and the Mayor of Athens, among others, have discussed TIP with Ambassador on numerous occasions. There is willingness to prosecute police incriminated in TIP (See Prosecution - K). High-level GOG officials have not been implicated in TIP rings as they have in some Balkan countries. In December, the need to protect and assist TIP victims was raised in Parliament by an opposition MP (See Prosecution - D).

Overview of GoG resources devoted to prevention: The coordinating committee produced the August 2004 National Action Plan to Fight Trafficking, which assigns specific anti-TIP responsibilities to each ministry (detailed in Prevention - J). The MFA doubled its 2004 budget for anti-trafficking projects to 3.1 million euros, much of which has gone to NGOs. Anti-TIP NGOs carry out public awareness campaigns, street work, cooperation with source country NGOs, research, and lobbying, among other activities (See Prevention section).

Overview of GoG resources devoted to prosecution: The first conviction under the new trafficking law occurred in January. The GoG sponsored a number of seminars and

trainings on TIP for police, judges, and prosecutors. Law enforcement participated in multinational, region-wide anti-trafficking efforts. Two special prosecutors have been assigned "the handling of the trafficking phenomenon" (Ref C). At the February 8 inter-ministerial meeting on trafficking, it was reportedly decided to give additional prosecutors outside of Athens responsibility for handling trafficking cases (See Prosecution section).

Overview of GoG resources devoted to protection: The Ministry of Health (MOH) has contributed resources to the creation of two medium-term shelters (one in Athens and one in Thessaloniki) and one short-term shelter run by the National Center of Immediate Social Assistance (EKAKV- a part of the MOH). EKAKV has a national center that operates an SOS hotline for general social and psychological assistance. There is at least one additional government-supported NGO hotline and four government-supported NGO shelters, with an additional GoG-funded NGO shelter under construction. Hellenic Aid funded anti-TIP Olympics-related projects. Additional Hellenic Aid funds to NGOs provide social and psychological support to victims, advocacy and social reintegration. The GoG collaborates with IOM and NGOs on voluntary repatriation of victims and conducted 12 such repatriations in 2004. The MPO has published a multilingual "know-your-rights" pamphlet, available in police stations around the country, that was designed to inform persons identified as possible trafficking victims of their rights and resources at their disposal (See Protection section).  
**H.** The Hellenic National Police (HNP) are making significant efforts on TIP -- perhaps more so than any other ministry -- including the deployment of specialized anti-trafficking units in Athens and Thessaloniki since 2003 and their planned expansion to five other cities. However NGOs and the media report that some local police facilitate trafficking, accept bribes to assist traffickers, or simply ignore the problem. During 2004, three police officers were sentenced to between three and five and a half years imprisonment on corruption charges related to their providing protection to a nightclub that used trafficked women, and three officers were given suspended sentences on charges related to a makeshift brothel where two trafficked women were held (see Prosecution - D). There have been no reports of high-level officials involved in trafficking crime rings.

**I.** While the HNP is very large (50,000 members), not all officers have been sensitized to the TIP problem in Greece. The MPO had made efforts to address this challenge by introducing police training, printing a "know your rights" informational brochure for victims, and issuing a directive from the Chief of Police reinforcing how to recognize, question, and assist victims of TIP (see Prosecution - G, ref D). Some corruption within the Greek bureaucracy and a slow judicial system contribute to limitations on the GoG's ability to address trafficking in practice. Finally, Greeks are tolerant of prostitution, especially by foreign women and, as demonstrated in a recent TIP case in northern Greece, a local community may be more supportive of a fellow villager and accused trafficker, than of a foreign TIP victim perceived to be a prostitute by choice. (Ref E, see Prosecution - D)

**J.** We request and receive reports from various ministries on anti-trafficking efforts. Monitoring and reporting statistics of arrests is good, but reporting on convictions is not as comprehensive. The MFA reported to the Embassy progress on action items that we requested for the G/TIP Interim Assessment in November. In February, the MFA provided a reported on completed and pending actions of the GoG's National Action Plan (see Prevention - J.) One component of the National Action Plan is the creation of a national database, with ministries providing statistics on traffickers arrested and prosecuted, numbers of victims identified and protected, NGO actions taken, and statistics on the number of entries and exits from specific countries of origin, inter alia. The statistics provided in this report are a result of information gathering efforts to support the creation of this database. The GoG also reports on its anti-trafficking efforts in local and international conferences.

**K.** Prostitution and brothel ownership is legal and regulated by the state. Prostitutes must register at the local prefecture and carry a medical card that is updated every two weeks. The minimum age is 18 (according to Article 6 of law 1193/81). Most prostitution in Greece is illegal -that is, the women are not licensed by the state - and is arranged by newspaper ads, in bars, or in strip clubs.

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Prevention  
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**A.** The GOG acknowledges that trafficking is a problem in Greece.

**B.** The following ministries are involved in anti-trafficking efforts:

Health (medical care for victims, operation of shelters, operation of telephone hotline, repatriation program with IOM)  
Public Order (TIP task force, TIP busts, arrests, victim screening, education of police)  
Justice (victim screening, prosecutions, convictions, education of prosecutors and judges, assignment of special TIP prosecutors, amendment of legislative framework)  
Foreign Affairs (Hellenic Aid programs and shelter funding, bilateral agreements, funding free legal aid for victims, funding of conferences and training seminars for police, judges, and prosecutors)  
Finance (authorizing funding for TIP efforts)  
Interior (amendment of legislative framework regarding residence permits, granting of residence permits, detention of illegal migrants)

The Education and Labor Ministries are also mentioned in anti-trafficking legislation and the National Action Plan as having some responsibilities for education, vocational training, and job placement of victims, but those programs remain in planning stages as of February 2005.

**C.** There have been GoG-funded anti-trafficking campaigns. The GoG funded the NGO Stop Now! to produce leaflets aimed at informing the general public (passed to G/TIP officials January 31). The leaflet defines trafficking, addresses common misperceptions about victims, explains why victims cannot escape their traffickers, and describes Greece's anti-TIP legislation. GoG funded Stop Now! television and radio PSAs show dramatic images relating to child sex trafficking and abuse of TIP victims. The PSAs targeted both the general public and clients, and were reportedly well received and effective. Stop Now! did not have funding to run the television ads in 2004, but ran radio PSAs and print ads targeting the general public and clients. Stop Now! also distributed small items such as cigarette lighters printed with questions that introduced TIP themes, such as "children in prostitution; do you agree?" The child anti-trafficking NGO ARSIS is launching a national ad campaign on child prostitution as part of the Nathalie II project financed by MFA. ARSIS also runs a weekly column on child trafficking in Thessaloniki newspapers and began publishing a periodical.

The GoG-funded NGO &Klimaka,<sup>8</sup> which recently opened a shelter for victims, produced leaflets and posters in Greek, English, Russian, Turkish, and Arabic, addressing trafficking victims which are posted at bus stations, on buses, and at Metro stations, and the NGO president reports receiving many calls based on the posters. Klimaka's brochure describes the problem, the Greek law, and the NGO action. It reads in part, "Klimaka has developed support and aid services to the victims of trafficking with emphasis on social and psychological support and rehabilitation, social integration, or voluntary repatriation of the victims." Klimaka's attractive poster reads "She thought this was a way to leave the miserable conditions of her country. Is there any way for her to leave forced prostitution? Trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation is a MODERN FORM OF SLAVERY." The poster states that Klimaka has a program to support victims of trafficking and exploitation and lists contact information, also noting that the program is financed by the MFA through Hellenic Aid.

The GoG-funded NGO of the Greek Orthodox Church, Solidarity, publicized its independent hotline and reported that its anti-TIP messages and hotline number would be printed on the back of bus tickets and phone cards as of February 15. Solidarity also included information about TIP prevention and fundraising in materials, such as their 2005 day planner. Solidarity's brochure of global programs includes information about its new shelter and anti-TIP program in Romania.

The privately-funded, church affiliated NGO KESO produced awareness raising leaflets which describe the TIP problem in Greece as follows: "Trafficking constitutes an immediate danger to the society, undermines democracy and is a stigma for our culture. Nations are destroyed when their values and human dignity are undermined. One million Greek citizens are the customers of 20,000 illegal and forcibly prostituted foreign women who were imported as a commodity into our country, and are victims of the transnational crime of trafficking. For these victims of sexual exploitation, KESO has a shelter (Mother's Hearth), where it provides support and assistance while victims are in Greece and until they are repatriated. KESO has suggested amendments to the law with strict penalties for traffickers as well as penalization for clients."

The Hellenic Aid-funded NGO "ACT UP," distributed multi-lingual information sheets on sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and prostitution at bars and on the streets during the period of the Olympic Games, operated a bilingual

telephone hotline, and attempted to detect trafficking victims, sometimes through information from clients. ACT UP does street work and focuses on STD identification and prevention especially among migrant prostitutes, and is a member of TAMPEP (Transnational AIDS/STD Prevention Among Migrant Prostitutes in Europe), a European network with 24 member countries that works on issues of migrant prostitution and promotion of anti-trafficking policies.

EKAKV, under the MOH, has started a public awareness campaign regarding its new victim telephone hotline, and has plans for additional PSAs on television. The EKAKV director reported that the hotline is becoming widely known and receives many calls, though many are not related to TIP. Additionally, the announcement of the GoG National Action Plan on TIP and hotline inauguration received media coverage (Refs F, G). The Mayor of Athens reported that the municipality's emergency hotline received and referred TIP calls.

**1D.** In the widest sense, the GOG uses organizations like the Interior Ministry's General Secretariat for Gender Equality and sponsors a number of programs for immigrants, especially women, that are part of TIP prevention efforts. Hellenic Aid also sponsors cooperation with anti-TIP programs in countries of origin to prevent trafficking.

**1E.** Yes, the GoG is able to support prevention programs through the 3.1 million euro Hellenic Aid budget for anti-trafficking projects. These funds support such programs in foreign countries that operate hotlines and information campaigns about realities of working in the EU with the ultimate goal of preventing potential victims from being lured into TIP.

**1F.** Under the new government, NGOs and IOs meet with the inter-ministerial council at the "permanent forum" instituted under the National Action Plan for dialogue between the GoG and NGOs. The first permanent forum meeting after the August announcement of the National Action Plan was held in November 2004 and the next meeting is planned for March 2005. The GoG has a productive, close relationship with IOM and some NGOs. Certain NGOs report that they are not as well connected with the highest-level policymakers on TIP as they were in the previous administration, but they have an audience with the Secretaries General at the permanent forum. Some NGOs claim

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that there is a political divide between the new "conservative" government and the NGOs. Access and coordination at the lower levels -- for NGOs to visit possible victims in detention centers, for example -- is inconsistent and often based on interpersonal relationships.

**1G.** Greece has acceptable border controls in general, though thousands of illegal immigrants are smuggled into the country every year. Police received updated TIP screening questions in a December Directive (see Prosecution ) G) and border patrol officers along the Bulgarian and Macedonian borders are informed on TIP. There have been isolated cases of police identifying and referring TIP cases from the airport and police stations, but there is no systematic monitoring of immigration and emigration patterns for evidence of trafficking. Many victims of sex trafficking come with tourist or temporary visas, implying that better screening is required at foreign Greek consulates than with border police.

Bulgarians do not need visas to enter Greece, which could contribute to the problem for Bulgarian victims. The National Action Plan provides for statistics on the number of entries and exits from specific countries of origin to be kept in the national database, and as of February 2005, collection of database information was still underway.

**1H.** In August 2004, an inter-ministerial level coordinating committee was established at the Secretary General level. The committee meets at least twice per month. The police have an internal affairs office to investigate police corruption. The Ombudsman's office is a watchdog for general government corruption and human rights complaints.

**1I.** The GOG has excellent cooperation with Interpol, Europol, SECI, and other regional groups with anti-TIP initiatives. In 2004, law enforcement officers participated in a multinational, region-wide SECI anti-TIP operation called "Mirage 2004." The Greek Chapter of the International Police Association held a trafficking conference in November 2004, sponsored by the GoG, which brought together law enforcement officers from throughout Greece, from Eastern European and former Soviet source countries, as well as officers from the FBI and Scotland Yard to share best practices and law enforcement tactics to fight trafficking as well as to hear from NGOs and academics on victim realities and trafficking trends.

**1J.** In August 2004, the GoG presented a national plan of action to address trafficking in person, entitled &Integrated Program: Actions for the Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings.8 The plan covers

inter-ministerial activities as well as specific activities of eight ministries. A copy of the plan was passed to G/TIP officials on January 31 and Post can pass an electronic English version upon request. NGOs were consulted in the development of the national action plan. The Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice and nine of his counterparts presented the national action plan at a press conference on August 4 (Ref F). The government has taken steps to disseminate the National Action Plan via its public release and press conference, at international conferences and meetings, as well as by delivering it to international organizations such as the IOM, SECI, OSCE, and EU.

[1](#)K. The inter-ministerial council discusses and develops anti-trafficking programs within the government. Ambassador Verros from the MFA, assisted by Mr. Moskoff of Hellenic Aid, are primarily responsible for coordinating this effort.

Fifth Annual Greece TIP Report Submission Continued Septel.